

AN ACT

To amend section 5902.02 of the Revised Code to add a member of the Paralyzed Veterans of America organization to the Veterans Advisory Committee.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:

SECTION 1. That section 5902.02 of the Revised Code be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 5902.02. The duties of the director of veterans services shall include the following:

(A) Furnishing the veterans service commissions of all counties of the state copies of the state laws, rules, and legislation relating to the operation of the commissions and their offices;

(B) Upon application, assisting the general public in obtaining records of vital statistics pertaining to veterans or their dependents;

(C) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code pertaining to minimum qualifications for hiring, certifying, and accrediting county veterans service officers, pertaining to their required duties, and pertaining to revocation of the certification of county veterans service officers;

(D) Adopting rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code for the education, training, certification, and duties of veterans service commissioners and for the revocation of the certification of a veterans service commissioner;

(E) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements enhancing employment and training for veterans in single or multiple county areas;

(F) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to enable county veterans service commissions to address homelessness, indigency, and other veteran-related issues individually or jointly;

(G) Developing and monitoring programs and agreements to enable state agencies, individually or jointly, that provide services to veterans, including the veterans' homes operated under Chapter 5907. of the Revised Code and the director of job and family services, to address homelessness, indigency, employment, and other veteran-related issues;

(H) Establishing and providing statistical reporting formats and procedures for county veterans service commissions;

(I) Publishing electronically a listing of county veterans service offices and county veterans service commissioners. The listing shall include the expiration dates of commission members' terms of office and the organizations they represent; the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of county veterans service offices; and the addresses and telephone numbers of the Ohio offices and headquarters of state and national veterans service organizations.

(J) Establishing a veterans advisory committee to advise and assist the department of veterans services in its duties. Members shall include a member of the national guard association of the United States who is a resident of this state, a member of the paralyzed veterans of America who is a

resident of this state, a member of the military officers association of America who is a resident of this state, a state representative of congressionally chartered veterans organizations referred to in section 5901.02 of the Revised Code, a representative of any other congressionally chartered state veterans organization that has at least one veterans service commissioner in the state, three representatives of the Ohio state association of county veterans service commissioners, who shall have a combined vote of one, three representatives of the state association of county veterans service officers, who shall have a combined vote of one, one representative of the county commissioners association of Ohio, who shall be a county commissioner not from the same county as any of the other county representatives, a representative of the advisory committee on women veterans, a representative of a labor organization, and a representative of the office of the attorney general. The department of veterans services shall submit to the advisory committee proposed rules for the committee's operation. The committee may review and revise these proposed rules prior to submitting them to the joint committee on agency rule review.

(K) Adopting, with the advice and assistance of the veterans advisory committee, policy and procedural guidelines that the veterans service commissions shall adhere to in the development and implementation of rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines for the administration of Chapter 5901. of the Revised Code. The department of veterans services shall adopt no guidelines or rules regulating the purposes, scope, duration, or amounts of financial assistance provided to applicants pursuant to sections 5901.01 to 5901.15 of the Revised Code. The director of veterans services may obtain opinions from the office of the attorney general regarding rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines of the veterans service commissions and may enforce compliance with Chapter 5901. of the Revised Code.

(L) Receiving copies of form DD214 filed in accordance with the director's guidelines adopted under division (L) of this section from members of veterans service commissions appointed under section 5901.02 and from county veterans service officers employed under section 5901.07 of the Revised Code;

(M) Developing and maintaining and improving a resource, such as a telephone answering point or a web site, by means of which veterans and their dependents, through a single portal, can access multiple sources of information and interaction with regard to the rights of, and the benefits available to, veterans and their dependents. The director of veterans services may enter into agreements with state and federal agencies, with agencies of political subdivisions, with state and local instrumentalities, and with private entities as necessary to make the resource as complete as is possible.

(N) Planning, organizing, advertising, and conducting outreach efforts, such as conferences and fairs, at which veterans and their dependents may meet, learn about the organization and operation of the department of veterans services and of veterans service commissions, and obtain information about the rights of, and the benefits and services available to, veterans and their dependents;

(O) Advertising, in print, on radio and television, and otherwise, the rights of, and the benefits and services available to, veterans and their dependents;

(P) Developing and advocating improved benefits and services for, and improved delivery of benefits and services to, veterans and their dependents;

(Q) Searching for, identifying, and reviewing statutory and administrative policies that relate to veterans and their dependents and reporting to the general assembly statutory and administrative policies that should be consolidated in whole or in part within the organization of the department of veterans services to unify funding, delivery, and accounting of statutory and administrative policy expressions that relate particularly to veterans and their dependents;

(R) Encouraging veterans service commissions to innovate and otherwise to improve efficiency in delivering benefits and services to veterans and their dependents and to report successful innovations and efficiencies to the director of veterans services;

(S) Publishing and encouraging adoption of successful innovations and efficiencies veterans service commissions have achieved in delivering benefits and services to veterans and their dependents;

(T) Establishing advisory committees, in addition to the veterans advisory committee established under division ~~(K)~~(J) of this section, on veterans issues;

(U) Developing and maintaining a relationship with the United States department of veterans affairs, seeking optimal federal benefits and services for Ohio veterans and their dependents, and encouraging veterans service commissions to maximize the federal benefits and services to which veterans and their dependents are entitled;

(V) Developing and maintaining relationships with the several veterans organizations, encouraging the organizations in their efforts at assisting veterans and their dependents, and advocating for adequate state subsidization of the organizations;

(W) Requiring the several veterans organizations that receive funding from the state annually, not later than the thirtieth day of July, to report to the director of veterans services and prescribing the form and content of the report;

(X) Reviewing the reports submitted to the director under division (W) of this section within thirty days of receipt and informing the veterans organization of any deficiencies that exist in the organization's report and that funding will not be released until the deficiencies have been corrected and a satisfactory report submitted;

(Y) Releasing funds and processing payments to veterans organizations when a report submitted to the director under division (W) of this section has been reviewed and determined to be satisfactory;

(Z) Furnishing copies of all reports that the director of veterans services has determined have been submitted satisfactorily under division (W) of this section to the chairperson of the finance committees of the general assembly;

(AA) Investigating complaints against county veterans services commissioners and county veterans service officers if the director reasonably believes the investigation to be appropriate and necessary;

(BB) Developing and maintaining a web site that is accessible by veterans and their dependents and provides a link to the web site of each state agency that issues a license, certificate, or other authorization permitting an individual to engage in an occupation or occupational activity;

(CC) Encouraging state agencies to conduct outreach efforts through which veterans and their dependents can learn about available job and education benefits;

(DD) Informing state agencies about changes in statutes and rules that affect veterans and

their dependents;

(EE) Assisting licensing agencies in adopting rules under section 5903.03 of the Revised Code;

(FF) Administering the provision of grants from the military injury relief fund under section 5902.05 of the Revised Code;

(GG) Taking any other actions required by this chapter.

SECTION 2. That existing section 5902.02 of the Revised Code is hereby repealed.

Speaker _____ *of the House of Representatives.*

President _____ *of the Senate.*

Passed _____, 20____

Approved _____, 20____

Governor.

S. B. No. 259

134th G.A.

The section numbering of law of a general and permanent nature is complete and in conformity with the Revised Code.

Director, Legislative Service Commission.

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State at Columbus, Ohio, on the ____ day of _____, A. D. 20 ____.

Secretary of State.

File No. _____ Effective Date _____